

Message Text

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60

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 L-03 NSC-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SPC-03

EB-11 COME-00 AID-20 DRC-01 /107 W

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R 071522Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2021

INFO USCINCSO FOR POLAD

UNCLAS CARACAS 10454

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR CU VE

SUBJECT: VENEZUELAN ELECTIONS: CAMPAIGN ENDS PEACEFULLY

REF: CARACAS 10437 AND 10412

1. THE 22-MONTH VENEZUELAN NATIONAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN ENDED PEACEFULLY AT MIDNIGHT DECEMBER 6, IN COMPLIANCE WITH INSTRUCTIONS OF THE SUPREME ELECTORAL COUNCIL (CSE). THE EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED NO REPORTS OF DISTURBANCES IN CARACAS OR ELSEWHERE IN THE COUNTRY. ALL PUBLIC ELECTIONEERING HAS NOW ENDED.

2. CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ ENDED HIS CAMPAIGN DECEMBER 6 WITH AN IMPRESSIVE MARCH THROUGH CARACAS CLIMAXED BY A TREMENDOUS RALLY IN THE PLAZA ALTAMIRA. THE EVENING OF DECEMBER 6 THE MEDIA WERE SATURATED BY AN OUTPOURING OF CAMPAIGN PROPAGANDA. NO LAST-MINUTE DRAMATIC ANNOUNCEMENTS WERE MADE BY THE GOVERNMENT OR BY ANY OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES. HOWEVER, THE COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER TRIBUNA POPULAR HAS ACCUSED THE SHELL OIL COMPANY OF CONTRIBUTING 550,000 BOLIVARES TO AD. SHELL HAS EMPHATICALLY DENIED THIS CHARGE.

3. PRESIDENT CALDERA, IN HIS WEEKLY PRESS CONFERENCE DECEMBER 6, SPOKE AT LENGTH ABOUT DEMOCRACY IN VENEZUELA. CALDERA TERMED THE ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN AND ITS CULMINATION ON DECEMBER 9 A REAFFIRMATION

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OF VENEZUELA'S FAITH IN THE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM, AND SAID THAT THE

OCCASION IS ONE FOR REJOICING NOT ONLY IN VENEZUELA "BUT ALSO IN
SISTER COUNTRIES WHO SEE IN OUR SITUATION AND ATTITUDE A LIGHT LIT
WITH HOPE." CALDERA ALSO PRAISED THE VENEZUELAN ARMED FORCES, "WHOSE
LOYALTY IS THE RESULT OF A DEEP AND FIRM CONVICTION THAT THE DEMOCRA-
TIC DESTINY OF THE COUNTRY OFFERS THE BEST POSSIBILITIES FOR NATIONAL-

ISTIC ASPIRATIONS AND FOR BRINGING ABOUT ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOP-
MENT."

3. THE CSE IS WORKING OVERTIME DURING THE DECEMBER 7 AND 8 GOVERN-
MENT HOLIDAYS IN AN ATTEMPT TO REGISTER THOUSANDS OF VOTERS WHO ARE
NOT YET INSCRIBED ON THE ELECTORAL REGISTERS OR WHO ARE UNSURE OF
THEIR POLLING PLACES. THE MEDIA ARE CONSTANTLY BROADCASTING INSTRUC-
TIONS AS TO REGISTRATION, AND IT IS HOPED THAT MUCH OF THE EXISTING
CONFUSION WILL BE CLEARED UP BY MIDNIGHT DECEMBER 8 WHEN LATE
REGISTRATION ENDS.
MCCLINTOCK

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ELECTION RESULTS, PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS, NATIONAL ELECTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 DEC 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973CARACA10454
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: CARACAS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731239/aaaabchf.tel
Line Count: 78
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: CARACAS 10437 AND 10412
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: elyme
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 OCT 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <18-Oct-2001 by bryansd0>; APPROVED <28 FEB 2002 by elyme>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VENEZUELAN ELECTIONS: CAMPAIGN ENDS PEACEFULLY
TAGS: PFOR, CU, VE, (PEREZ, CARLOS ANDRES)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005